Complaints Management Policy

Section 1 - Purpose and Scope

(1) The University of Queensland (UQ or the University) is committed to providing a complaints management system that is transparent, responsive, efficient, and effective. UQ recognises that an effective complaints management system will not only improve engagement from our community but will also assist in the identification of systemic and re-occurring issues.

(2) UQ acknowledges that all staff, students, and members of the community have a right to make complaints about University services, or conduct of its staff and students. This Policy provides the overarching framework under which complaints about the University (including its staff and students) are received.

(3) This Policy and associated procedures have been developed with consideration to the Queensland Ombudsman recommendations on developing effective complaints management frameworks and the Australian Standard 10002:2022 Guidelines for complaints management in organisations.

(4) This Policy applies to all UQ staff and students and acts as a guide for members of the community.

Application

(5) Where another UQ policy or procedure provides a complaints or review process that is applicable, this Policy will not apply.

Section 2 - Principles and Key Requirements

(6) UQ's complaints management system is comprised of various complaint management processes implemented under relevant policies and procedures.

(7) UQ's complaints management system is based on the fundamental principles of: visibility and access, confidentiality, responsiveness, assessment and action, feedback and monitoring effectiveness. To give effect to these principles, UQ will:

a. Visibility and Access
    i. provide simple, flexible and accessible avenues for staff, students and the community to lodge complaints;
    ii. communicate to staff, students and the community on how to access the University's complaints processes;
    iii. where possible, help complainants who may need assistance with lodging a complaint.
b. Confidentiality
    i. treat all complaints confidentially and protect personal information of the complainant in accordance with its Privacy Policy and, where applicable, the Public Interest Disclosure Policy (subject to any disclosure requirements in accordance with the principles of natural justice or otherwise at law).
c. Responsiveness

i. ensure that complaints management training is provided to staff responsible for receiving, processing and/or responding to complaints;
ii. acknowledge and respond to complaints in a timely manner;
iii. manage and deal with complaints as soon as practicable and, where appropriate, promptly communicate the outcomes to the complainants.

d. Assessment and Action
   i. handle complaints fairly, remain impartial and appropriately adhere to principles of natural justice and good governance;
   ii. deal with complaints and complainants respectfully, professionally and in accordance with this Policy and its accompanying procedures.

e. Feedback
   i. communicate with complainants in a timely manner about the management and progress of their complaint;
   ii. where possible and appropriate, inform the complainant of the factors considered in arriving at an outcome and the reasons for the outcome;
   iii. communicate to the complainant about the complainant's right to any internal and/or external review of a decision made by UQ about their complaint.

f. Monitoring Effectiveness
   i. meet its statutory and legislative requirements to report certain complaints to relevant reporting agencies;
   ii. monitor complaint trends and identify and promptly address any systemic issues;
   iii. continue to review its complaints management processes to ensure complaints are dealt with fairly, confidentially, efficiently and in a timely manner.

Section 3 - Roles, Responsibilities and Accountabilities

Vice-Chancellor and President

(8) The Vice-Chancellor and President has the overall responsibility for the University's management of complaints.

Senior Management

(9) Senior Management are responsible within their organisational area to ensure staff are aware of UQ's policy and procedures on complaints management and encourage the prompt and fair management of complaints in accordance with this Policy.

Disclosures and Complaints Management Committee

(10) The Disclosures and Complaints Management Committee (DCMC) is responsible for making decisions about how particular allegations should be dealt with, including whether an allegation should be investigated, by whom, and what resources should be made available to deal with an allegation.

(11) Members of the committee will refer serious matters, such as fraud, where there is potential for criminal charges to result, or that they otherwise consider best handled by the Integrity Unit, to the DCMC for consideration. If so determined by the DCMC, the Chief Human Resources Officer or Chief Operating Officer may refer an allegation to the Integrity Unit for investigation. Matters that are not referred to the Integrity Unit will be referred to the Human Resources Division for consideration.

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All staff

(12) Staff will endeavour to provide assistance to a person wishing to make a complaint and guide them to the correct policy or procedures for their particular issue, including how they can make a complaint.

Director, Integrity Unit

(13) The Director, Integrity Unit is responsible for the implementation (including providing training and increasing awareness) and management of the Policy.

Section 4 - Monitoring, Review and Assurance

(14) The Integrity Unit will periodically review this Policy and its procedures for effectiveness.

Section 5 - Recording and Reporting

(15) The management of complaints received by the University will be recorded using the complaint management systems implemented under the relevant policies or procedures.

Section 6 - Appendix

Definitions

Term	Definition
Complaint	A complaint is an expression of dissatisfaction with a product or service offered or provided by the University or the conduct of its staff or students (in relation to their role at the University), whether voiced by a member within the community, staff or a student.
Complainant	The person who has made a complaint.
Staff	Means all officers and employees of the University, persons acting in an honorary or voluntary capacity for, or at the University, and members of the University Senate.
Student	means a person enrolled as a student at the University or undertaking courses or programs at the University.

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